

In 2013, we imported approximately 925 million barrels of crude oil from Canada, with over 400 million of these barrels coming from tar sands and not subject to the tax that goes into the cleanup fund. This is a significant liability, without any investment being made for it and when there is a tar sands spill.

Oil that comes from tar sands is a thick, sticky form of crude oil that can be more difficult and costly to clean up than other types of crude. In 2010, for example, a pipeline owned and operated by a Canadian company, Enbridge, spilled more than 850,000 gallons of tar sands oil into a waterway that flows into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. That has been one of the largest and costliest pipeline spills in American history, with the price tag now at \$1.2 billion dollars.

I do not support the development of tar sands—doing so is environmentally destructive and carbon-intensive. Moreover, we should not keep in place a loophole that lets big oil companies off the hook for cleaning up their tar sands spills.

The Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act would add oil derived from tar sands and oil shale to the definition of crude oil, closing the current loophole and ensuring that oil companies pay into the fund.

Oil companies already get billions of dollars in taxpayer-based subsidies, and this bill will ensure they will not be given an additional free ride on tar sands and any future oil shale development.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FLORIDA'S LGBT COMMUNITY

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Florida's LGBT community in their fight against discrimination. In particular, I would like to commend their commitment to bringing marriage equality to the great State of Florida.

Following decades of advocacy and exhaustive legal battles, marriage equality finally became legal this week in Florida. At 12:01 a.m. on January 6, 2015, the Osceola County Courthouse opened its doors. I stood with Armando Ramirez, the county's Clerk of Courts, as he conducted the first same-sex marriage ceremony in Central Florida, which united County Commissioner Cheryl Grieb and her partner of 22 years, Patti Daugherty. At long last, the promise of marriage equality was fulfilled.

More than twenty couples participated in marriage ceremonies, before the courthouse doors closed at 2 a.m. These couples had at last achieved one of the greatest promises of this nation, the promise of equal protection under the law.

What this demonstrated is that the American Dream is not really about a house, a job, or a 401(k) plan. The American Dream is also about love, opportunity, and equality—the promise that each and every one of us has the right to love whomever we please, and the opportunity to have our love recognized equally by the law.

Thanks to the unrelenting efforts of Floridians fighting for marriage equality, same-sex

couples in Florida finally had that opportunity. The marriages that began on January 6th at 12:01 a.m. could not have happened without the perseverance of these individuals.

To those Floridians who fought for this day, I say "congratulations" and "thank you." Thank you for helping our State and our communities come one step closer to true equality. I am proud to have worked with you to achieve this goal. There is more work to be done, and I look forward to serving as your ally in the years ahead.

The Osceola County Commission and the Osceola County Clerk of Courts Armando Ramirez also deserve thanks for their efforts. When county clerks in Florida were advised that they would face arrest if they issued same-sex licenses, Commissioner Grieb and I called on State Attorney Jeff Ashton to promise that he would not prosecute clerks for doing so. Thankfully, he agreed. Following my letter urging the County Commission to ensure that same-sex marriages could take place in Osceola County immediately, the Commission and the Clerk worked together to issue licenses and conduct ceremonies as soon as legally possible.

I also want to acknowledge the Floridians who fought for marriage equality but never lived to see this dream become reality. For those who called for marriage equality when others said it was impossible; those who had the audacity to believe in equality when many could not; and those who paved the way for this historical achievement but never experienced it for themselves. This is their legacy. May their memory serve as an inspiration for the next generation of Floridians striving to achieve a more equal and just world.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to celebrate this enormous accomplishment and honor the Floridians who made this happen.

COMMENDATION OF DR. TIMOTHY SNYDER

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise as co-chair of the Congressional Polish Caucus to announce that this week in Washington, at an historic ceremony to be held today at the Polish Embassy, Thursday, January 8, pre-eminent American scholar and historian Dr. Timothy Snyder will be awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland by Minister of Foreign Affairs Grzegorz Schetyna on behalf of the nation of Poland.

We in Ohio are celebrating this occasion because we know the global significance of Dr. Snyder's work. His scholarship allows liberty's flag to fly higher. An Ohioan by birth, Dr. Snyder—now Bird White Housum Professor of History at Yale University—has been documenting the complicated, epic history of what he terms "The Bloodlands," the 20th century history of Europe between Hitler and Stalin. With the opening of the Soviet archives after the fall of the Soviet Union, Dr. Snyder has led a team of incredible scholars from many nations in piecing together the complex, and often under reported history, of what happened to people in Europe before, during, and after World Wars I and II.

He places the historical and political complexities that led to World War II in a broad, contextual framework unparalleled by other efforts. He factually documents the suffering that innocent people from various nations endured in places that still today have seriously inadequate archival memory of what occurred. Dr. Snyder, in my opinion, is one of the most indefatigable and profound scholars of our time.

As author of the bill that created the World War II Memorial here in our nation's Capital—which has now been visited by over 42 million people—it is clear to me the American people through their own families understand the magnitude of what was at stake. But as Dr. Snyder rightly points out, "America's soldiers never reached far enough east. He states, "American and British forces liberated German concentration camps such as Belsen and Dachau. But the western Allies liberated none of the important death facilities . . . the Red Army liberated Auschwitz, and it liberated the sites of Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzen, Chelmno, Majdanek. American and British forces reached none of the bloodlands and saw none of the major killing sites." Even America was shielded from the bloody truth of tyranny's grip on the continent of Europe.

The people of Poland even more fully comprehend the betrayal and suffering that their Slavic ancestors endured in Poland and Sovietized Ukraine. The Jewish people of the world know too what happened there and why the struggle for Israel's existence continues to this day. The people of Belarus, Hungary, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania and adjoining nations know too. With the systematic ethnic slaughter that occurred, Dr. Snyder's masterful work pays homage to all victims, in the most complete and objective presentation I have read. Yet, still more scholarly work needs to occur.

This past August, the people of Poland commemorated the memory of the Warsaw Uprising. Those brave Poles honored at that national remembrance lived and died by the motto "Freedom Means Never Surrender." Poland never surrendered. Her capital was levelled. And the martyrdom of Poles—fully twenty percent of the people of that nation—humbles us mortals who stand in awe of their valor against insurmountable odds. What distinguishes Snyder's work is its comprehensiveness and depth in paying tribute to the fallen across that entire war torn region.

We will fly a flag over the U.S. Capitol honoring the work of American scholar Dr. Timothy Snyder and his legion of dedicated scholars. I have come to respect Dr. Snyder's work because his scholarship helped me reach my own epiphany and conclusion about why it has taken the world so long to appreciate what the people of Poland suffered during that gruesome period. Nearly all of the educated and academic leaders of Poland were annihilated at Katyn in 1940, when over 23,000 were rounded up and summarily shot by Stalin's NKVD, the Soviet secret police. There simply was almost no Polish memory left able to record and relate. It has taken new generations of those able to probe the carnage to enlighten the pages of memory.

So, please let me express sincere gratitude to the government of Poland for bestowing this great honor on a native son of Ohio who has gone on to serve the cause of historical truth. As a history major myself from my own alma mater—the great University of Wisconsin—I

recall the words of that University's motto: "Whatever limitations may trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great State University of Wisconsin should encourage the continual sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found." Dr. Timothy Snyder and his associates surely live those words. Congratulations! Onward truth. Onward liberty.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, on January 6, 2015, due to weather, I was unavoidably detained and missed recorded votes #1–2. Had I been present, on rollcall #1 (Quorum Call), I would have voted present and on rollcall #2, I would have voted for NANCY PELOSI for Speaker of the House.

REDESIGNATION OF THE 209TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and as a fellow member of the Mississippi National Guard, it is my pleasure to welcome and congratulate the brave men and women of the 209th Civil Engineer Squadron. The airmen who stand before you today are unique professionals who have answered the nation's call to support and defend our great nation and state. Today's ceremony truly represents the next chapter in a storied legacy of "Americans at their best."

Since 1969, the 209th Civilian Engineer Squadron has served our State with honor and distinction and for more than a decade, worked shoulder-to-shoulder with the Special Operations community. These airmen have provided world class support services and civil engineering teams during crisis response operations all around the globe. Today's redesignation ceremony officially recognizes your skills, talents and esprit de corps . . . the hallmark of the Special Operations community.

As the new colors are uncased, you will carry on a long lineage of Special Operations units, who for nearly a century have operated at the tip of the spear and in harm's way. Most recently, our special operators have played key roles in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as provided significant efforts toward humanitarian operations in Africa and counter-narcotics missions in South America. Within our own shores, National Guard Special Forces have responded to the devastating effects of natural disasters, providing unique resources and personal commitment to aid their fellow Americans.

I'd like to send a special thanks to our military families. The preparedness of our airmen is only possible through the loving support of our immediate and extended families, who keep our households running during the uncertainty of deployments.

Congratulations again to our unit leaders and airmen! As we look toward the future, the

world isn't getting any safer. Your skills, talents, will remain in high demand. Through perseverance, hard work and training, the 209th Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron will remain ready, strategically mobile and postured to respond to crisis at home and abroad.

HONORING MARQUITA DEAN SODREL

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Marquita Dean Sodrel, a loving mother and the wife of my friend, former Congressman Mike Sodrel.

Marquita, who was known as Keta by her friends and family, was a devoted wife to her husband of 47 years, Mike. Together, they had two children and seven granddaughters. Keta enjoyed a family centered life. Although she worked hard as a Corporate Secretary at her family business, Keta considered her main job to be a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. Keta was a woman of strong faith. Wherever she traveled and worked, Keta always said that she was, "working for the Lord."

Keta was also an important partner to her husband Mike's service in Congress. In every sense, they served the people of Indiana's 9th Congressional District together.

Keta was a remarkable woman who will be missed by all of those whose lives she has touched. Today, It is my privilege to honor the life of Marquita Dean Sodrel.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH "JOJO BENSON" HEWELL

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man, legendary musician and dear friend, Mr. Joseph "JoJo Benson" Hewell. Sadly, JoJo passed away on Tuesday, December 23, 2014. A home-going celebration was held in his honor on Saturday, January 3, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. at the Occasions Event Center in Columbus, Georgia.

JoJo was born in Phenix City, Alabama where he attended Mother Mary Mission School. He and his brothers, Gene and Fletcher, were gifted with musical talents which they shared performing together across the Columbus area. But JoJo was destined for greatness and he rose to become an incredibly well-known and adored American blues and soul singer with a distinctive style.

JoJo was a passionate and dedicated artist who captured the hearts of hundreds of fans with his duets with Peggy Scott. Their best hits made it to the Billboard charts and eventually became gold records. The hit "Pickin' Wild Mountain Berries" was also nominated for a Grammy. For over 40 years, JoJo worked to accomplish his dream of making his

music heard all around the world. His music traveled across nations delighting the ears of many fans of different backgrounds, and he became known as a great International Recording Artist.

In 2004, JoJo was inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame for his wondrous musical talent. He was also elected to become Ambassador of Music in Columbus, Georgia. Throughout his life, he continued to receive honors and accolades as he became a successful entrepreneur while still recording music and performing shows.

JoJo was also an avid golfer. He loved the game and his life in many ways reflected it. On the front nine, he always managed to land in the fairway, with long beautiful drives, great approach shots, excellent chips, solid putts and thunderous cheers from the gallery. On the back nine, he struggled not to land out of bounds, to get back to the fairway, to avoid the hazards and to reach the greens—with loud groans from some in the gallery. But he did not pick up his ball and quit! He kept his pride, never gave up and continued planning his next shot and his next big show!

As a man, JoJo was charming and his silver tongue and flamboyant persona melted the hearts of countless ladies who found themselves overcome and taken by his infectious charisma. But watch out! If you crossed him, that same tongue using the most acid invective and most colorful expletives could inflict a sharp and cutting tongue lashing—an old fashioned "cussing out!"

JoJo is survived by his children, Joseph Hewell, Jr., Gregory Henley, Dionne Henley, Collette McCoy, and Josette McCoy; a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews; siblings, Walter Gene Hewell, Vera Harris, Windon Harris, Litton Harris, Rita Harris, Lois Hewell Hall, Sherwood Hewell, Jessie Hewell, Michael Hewell, Danny Hewell, and Carl Stevens; lifelong companion Angela McCoy; lifelong friend Shirley Sturgis; and many, many friends.

JoJo loved life and lived it to the fullest. He was my friend and he touched all of our lives in ways we will never forget. JoJo's legacy will live on in the spirit of his children and many stories and anecdotes will be enjoyed by his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. JoJo's eleven siblings and many friends will always recount the joy of knowing, loving, and sharing the life of such a unique and accomplished man.

Mr. Speaker, my wife Vivian and I, along with the more than 700,000 residents of Georgia's Second Congressional District and adoring fans across the world, continue to enjoy and cherish JoJo Benson's remarkable musical achievements. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in extending our deepest sympathies to JoJo's family, friends and loved ones during this difficult time. We pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

HONORING MRS. LAURA ROSS BROWN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues, Congressman ROBERT C. "BOBBY"